

Speaking/Interacting & Writing

(1) It is assumed that all 'productions' described below are from memory (not read)

(2) Levels are cumulative (i.e. it does not necessarily mean that they are not doing what they were doing in previous levels)

Procedures for assessment (speaking & interacting)

Note:

Currently we are proposing 5 levels with 1, 3, and 5 being principal levels and 2, 4 being intermediate points. We would propose that the 5 levels are each split into two (although without descriptors for the splits) designated as 'just meeting this level' and 'comfortably meeting this level'.

The judgement is based principally on weeks leading up to an assessment reference point but would also include any material (e.g. strategic behaviour material or other forms of evidence) during the period in question.

Procedure

Always start with a holistic judgement of the level of the skill first. That is the '**Main Development Strand**' (MDS). At this stage the teacher should avoid being influenced by any other non-speaking tests carried out in class (e.g. vocabulary tests). The judgement is based on a student's communication either in whole class or small group situations (this may include evidence of a willingness to communicate); the judgement is then backed up by referring to the **Supporting Strands**: a) linguistic knowledge via objective tests of vocabulary and grammar; b) strategic behaviour materials which students produce.

Example

A teacher grades a student at level 3 for speaking based on a role-play situation, and their whole class participation over a whole series of lessons. They then check the student's vocabulary test and grammar test and look at what the student has offered as evidence of strategic behaviour. These test results have two functions: to corroborate the skills judgement and to provide formative feedback to the learner (but!!! They are not reported formally to SMT!). The teacher notes that the student has relatively low linguistic knowledge suggesting that their performance in the speaking is quite limited to a single topic and they may have compensated for low linguistic knowledge by very effective strategy use. The teacher may therefore decide that level 3 is being too generous and keep the student at level 2 until the linguistic knowledge increases and the skilled performance is maintained. We have in mind a particular band of linguistic knowledge associated with each skill level.

In terms of feedback to the learner it is useful for him/her to know that it is important to maintain the effective strategic behaviour but to increase their linguistic knowledge.

Main development strands

Speaking / Interacting	Writing
<p>Level 1 - A beginner communicator</p> <p>Can produce short (taught) phrases on a limited range of topics which are understandable by a sympathetic native speaker. They are likely to be reliant on un-analysed chunks of language. They are already confident with asking a limited set of question types. They are beginning to use the kind of language needed to interact with their teacher and with each other. Pronunciation is acceptable when reproducing language which has been introduced orally. It may become inaccurate when influenced by the written form (see reading framework). Recalling this type of language does not result in undue hesitations and pauses.</p>	<p>Level 1 - A beginner communicator</p> <p>Can produce short (taught) sentences (Subject-Verb-Object) on a limited range of topics as appropriate to genre and contexts (e.g. short emails, postcards; text messages). Sentences are likely to be combinations of un-analysed chunks of language (e.g. <i>Il y a + trois chambres + dans ma maison</i>). When dictionary look-up is used this may result in some L1-transfer mistakes. One would expect accuracy when they have adapted a model provided. One would tolerate inaccuracy when writing from memory. Meaning is understandable.</p>
<p>Level 2 - (all of 1 consistently and confidently, plus)</p> <p>Set phrases produced increase and begin to be transferred to different topics and contexts. Phrases are beginning to be (re)combined with others to achieve new meaning.</p>	<p>Level 2 - (all of 1 consistently and confidently, plus)</p> <p>They consistently produce short sentences (SVO) on a wide range of topics they have met. They can ask questions of the reader with reasonable accuracy. They are beginning to ‘restructure/unpack’ chunks by experimenting with grammatical structures, and this may lead to inaccuracy.</p>
<p>Level 3 - An experimenting communicator</p> <p>Beginning to produce utterances & fragments creatively (untaught) .They make spontaneous contributions (for real communication). When attempting spoken productions they may contain inaccuracies, pauses, hesitations and reformulations. Their pronunciation of words encountered in written form shows evidence of overcoming the possible influence of English sound-spelling system. They feel confident with a variety of topics which have been taught. Can ask a range of question types (information; requests etc.) and can make limited and appropriate comments spontaneously They use the TL fairly routinely to interact with the teacher and peers. They are able to sustain longer interactions (multiple turn exchanges but not a sustained discussion).</p>	<p>Level 3 - An experimenting communicator</p> <p>Beginning to write sentences which appear to be the result of creating new meanings through manipulating the language creatively. Confident with longer stretches of writing and which adhere to a recognisable genre (e.g. letters; reports of an event). Writing is <i>either</i> controlled (e.g. short sentences, SVO) and accurate <i>or</i> experimental (e.g. with relative clauses; reversed word order), the latter resulting in some errors. They are beginning to feel confident with writing on a few topics which have <i>not</i> been taught, & with only dictionary as support. They can sustain a longer correspondence with an interlocutor (e.g. 4 or 5 emails or texts).</p>

<p>Level 4 - (all of 1, 2, & 3, plus)</p> <p>Generating their own language rather than that of the teacher/text book (this progression is characterized either by an increase in accuracy and fluency within self-imposed limits <i>or</i> an increase in ambition [complexity of language] but with greater inaccuracy/hesitation). They are beginning to engage in freer multi-exchange discussions and showing some ability to cope with the unexpected. They are beginning to feel confident with their own topics of conversation.</p>	<p>Level 4 - (all of 1, 2, & 3, plus)</p> <p>They are confident with generating their own language rather than that of the teacher/textbook. They can write a narrative with reasonable accuracy. Their writing is not unduly characterized by anglicisms.</p>
<p>Level 5 - A confident and competent communicator</p> <p>They can handle a variety of topics (not limited to taught ones) in a range of contexts (e.g. social situations, transactional tasks, negotiations) which may go beyond their immediate setting. Messages are easily understood by a sympathetic native speaker. Pronunciation and intonation are by and large accurate. Pronunciation is rarely influenced by L1. They initiate conversation, ask a full range of questions, and make comments spontaneously. They show an ability to cope with the unexpected. Pauses and hesitations are not excessive and length of utterances between pauses is substantial. A range of language forms (including a full range of question forms) are used which meet the communicative needs appropriately and efficiently (e.g. there is little need to avoid particular forms)</p>	<p>Level 5 - A competent and confident communicator</p> <p>They can handle a variety of topics (not limited to taught ones) in a range of contexts (e.g. social situations, transactional tasks, negotiations) which may go beyond their immediate setting. They write paragraphs which demonstrate cohesion. Their writing feels ‘French’ and is appropriate for the target audience. Some inaccuracies persist but only when the writer is stretching his/her linguistic resources. They use a range of language forms including rhetorical devices and nuances of expression.</p>

Supporting strand 1 - Linguistic Knowledge & Strategic Behaviour (SB)

Developmental criteria:

(1) Productive Vocabulary (recalled from L1) Breadth & Depth (VBD):

Number of non-cognate words produced; accuracy of cognate words produced; Number of collocations produced;

(2) Evidence of a Developing Rule System (DRS):

The testing system (school-tailored Grammaticality Judgement Test) would include: Knowledge of function words; Number of verb phrases (types) produced; ability to refer to present, past and future

Level 1 - Essential linguistic knowledge

- 1) (VBD) Can recall at least 30 (??) non-cognate words (e.g. arbres; dans) although they may be inaccurate in form. Can recall at least 12 collocations (e.g. *à bientôt, tout de suite*). Can quickly recall correct form of at least 50 cognate words.
- 2) (DRS) none expected

Level 3 - Rapidly developing linguistic knowledge

- 1) (VBD) Can recall at least 80 non-cognate words. Some may be inaccurate in form.
- 2) Can recall at least 25 collocations (e.g. *à mon avis*). Can quickly recall correct form of at least 100 cognate words. Has a range of both concrete and abstract vocabulary.
- 3) (DRS) awareness of when TL structure differs from English; awareness of the importance of function words in spontaneous productions and in writing (prepositions; articles)

Level 5 - Secure linguistic knowledge

- 1) (VBD) Can recall a wide range of vocabulary and collocations quickly and confidently. The range includes a considerable number of items which are abstract in nature. They have vocabulary knowledge depth as well as breadth (e.g. how words can have multiple meanings)
- 2) (DRS) displays knowledge of a full range of grammatical patterns of the target language.

Supporting strand 2 - Strategic Behaviour and Self-Efficacy, Confidence

- **Strategic behaviour (SB):** application of strategy combinations to tasks; Reliance on teacher; reaction to feedback;
- Awareness of how SB affects Self-efficacy & attribution
- (SB) Asks teacher how to say something; (in speaking) beginning to use fillers to buy processing time; uses intonation to compensate for difficulties encountered; attempts to coin TL words
- (SB) evidence of ability to paraphrase difficulties;
- In speaking uses fillers; coinage; sensible avoidance;
- In writing shows evidence of reflecting on formulation problems (e.g. “shall I use a set phrase here or try to translate from English?”)
- Teacher feedback (especially in writing) is taken seriously/acted upon in some way.